

the groundwork for another century of American leadership on the world stage. It passed with nearly 70 votes—an overwhelming and rare display of bipartisan support. As I mentioned yesterday, we are going to work with Speaker PELOSI and the relevant committee chairs in the House to move this bill forward as quickly as possible. It is vital to our Nation's future that the House and Senate must come together to send President Biden a bill that he can sign into law.

The Senate also confirmed the first judicial appointments of President Biden's tenure—two district court judges—and we will confirm a third today, the first Muslim American to serve as an article III judge in our history. On Monday, the Senate will confirm President Biden's first circuit court nominee, the amazing Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, and next week, this Chamber will take up additional, highly qualified nominees to the executive branch, including Lina Khan for the Federal Trade Commission and several others.

The Senate Democratic majority will move swiftly to perform our constitutional duty to advise and consent on the President's nominees.

RANSOMWARE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on another matter, ransomware, over the past few months, there have been a number of high-profile cyber attacks against the U.S. Government, American businesses, and critical infrastructure. From the cyber winds attack last year to a ransomware attack on the city of Baltimore and the Colonial Pipeline, cyber crime is a real and growing threat.

Just last week, the MTA, our vast subway system in New York, was the victim of an attack.

While the Attorney General has announced an intensified effort to combat this scourge of ransomware attacks, we in Congress have a responsibility to conduct oversight and determine whether our government needs an additional authority and resource to take the fight to cyber criminals and foreign intelligence services.

Congress must ensure that Federal Agencies, like the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, have the necessary resources to take on this growing threat and support State and local governments under assault. So earlier this week, I called for Congress to increase CISA'S budget by \$500 million to fight this growing threat, and today I am asking Chairman PETERS—GARY PETERS of our Homeland Security Committee—and the other relevant committee chairs to begin a government-wide review of these attacks and determine what legislation may be needed to counter the threat of cyber crime and bring the fight to the cyber criminals.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on one final matter, I want my colleagues to be aware of the number “29 percent.” That is the percentage of Republican voters who believe that President Trump will be “reinstated” as President later this summer—29 percent. Almost a third of Republican voters believe he will be reinstated as President. According to that recent poll by Morning Consult, nearly a third—nearly a third—of Republican voters believe Donald Trump will be reinstated.

Of course, the idea of “reinstatement” comes from the disgraced former President Trump himself and is nothing more than the deluded ramblings of a defeated politician. But it is a glaring warning that the Big Lie has created fertile ground for all sorts of insane conspiracy.

It is a depressing fact of our times that there is an audience out there who will literally believe anything the former President says, no matter how unrealistic or untrue. They believe him when he just abjectly lies.

The blame here, however, does not rest only with the former President. The blame falls heavily on Washington Republicans and the political right who have not done enough to stand up to the Big Lie.

After making a few brave noises in the wake of January 6, Republican leadership here in Washington now seems to have traded political courage and truth for appeasement.

The Republican minority leader in the House called Donald Trump “morally responsible” for the attack on January 6. He empowered his deputies to take part in painstaking negotiations to establish an independent commission to study those events and then promptly voted against it. He convened his entire conference to deliver a pink slip to the one Member of his leadership team who dared repeat the truth that President Biden is the President.

Here in the Senate, the Republican leader gave a strong speech on January 6 and was willing to hold Donald Trump responsible for what happened that day. Several months later, however, the Republican leader whipped his Members into a partisan filibuster of an independent commission, which he called a “purely political exercise.”

The Republican Party is now wrapped around the axle of the Big Lie, and a big reason why is that Republican leaders are unwilling to move on from Trumpism.

We are watching the results play out in State after State, where Republican legislatures have swallowed the Big Lie whole and are rapidly constricting the right to vote and fumbling through old ballots for traces of bamboo.

The truth is, the Big Lie has consequences. It erodes our trust in elections, faith in our democracy, and it is gnawing away at the very right to vote in America.

After 4 long years during which the Republican Party foolishly tried to

ride the tiger of Donald Trump, it seems as though many of them wound up inside.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Zahid N. Quraishi, of New Jersey, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey.

ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, last night, the Air Force announced some historic news for South Dakota, and today I am proud to share that Ellsworth Air Force Base in Western South Dakota has been officially named Main Operating Base 1 for the future B-21 Bomber, home of the Raider. This designation not only means that Ellsworth will be the first base to host the B-21 Raider, but it will also host the formal training unit and the first operational squadron.

Those who have heard me talk about the importance of this decision likely know the outlook for the base wasn't so rosy 16 years ago. I had just arrived here in the Senate in 2005 when Ellsworth was placed on the base realignment and closure, or BRAC, list that May. It was an all-hands effort by the congressional delegation and Ellsworth and State and community leaders to make the case to the Bush administration and to the BRAC Commission to remove Ellsworth from the closure list.

Many thought South Dakota might not have the clout to make this stand; that we didn't wield enough influence. We were only given about a 12-percent odds of pulling through, but we were determined that we weren't going to lose Ellsworth.

We started by challenging the cost-savings assumptions of the BRAC Commission, which began to unravel under

scrutiny, and we proved it would actually cost money to close Ellsworth. We also pressed the Commissioners not to put all of our eggs in one basket when it comes to our Nation's security interests, highlighting the organizational risk of consolidating all of our B-1s at one location. The outlook was grim, but we stood our ground and we won the day and we were removed from the BRAC list that August.

But we didn't stop there. We got right to work on building up the base so that we would never again find ourselves in the same position. In 2007, we saw the Air Force Financial Services Center open at Ellsworth; 2011, saw the arrival of the 89th Attack Squadron and its command and control stations for MQ-9 Reapers. In 2015, a decade-long mission paid off with the quadrupling of the training airspace for the base. The Powder River Training Complex is now the largest training airspace in the continental United States and can be used for large-force exercises that draw combat aircraft from across the country, and it is well suited for B-21 training. This is just one of the efforts that we undertook to put Ellsworth in the best position possible to secure this new mission, and it is wonderful to see it pay off with yesterday's announcement.

I know that while South Dakota is celebrating today, others are disappointed in this decision. For those who were seeking to have the Main Operating Base 1 in their State but will now follow Ellsworth in the sequencing and wait a little longer for the B-21 mission to arrive, know this: My support for the B-21 enterprise will not lessen because we are at this milestone.

As I said, we argued 15 years ago that the United States should not put all its eggs in one basket when it comes to strategic assets. I stand by that reasoning to this day. Under the current bomber roadmap, every bomber base will keep a bomber mission well into the future. The Stealth B-21 will eventually replace our B-1s and Stealth B-2s at bases around the country. Meanwhile, our fleet of B-52s will be given new modern engines through a service life extension program. All of our bomber bases which have played and continue to play an essential role in our national security will continue to do so. Long-range strike will remain a team effort.

The core of our military strength is our men and women in uniform. They volunteer to lay down their lives, if necessary, in the service of our Nation, and it is incumbent on us here in Congress to do our part to ensure that they have the tools they need to succeed in their missions.

The B-21 is an essential part of that equation. I remind my colleagues that the United States is one of only three countries in the world that operate a strategic bomber. The other two countries are Russia and China, and they are both working to develop their own

next-generation bombers. We cannot afford to cede any ground.

The B-21 is scheduled to take its first flight in 2022 and should enter service around 2027. It will replace our aging B-1s, which have proven a workhorse over the last several decades, as well as two squadrons of B-2s.

But our small bomber fleet is growing smaller. Seventeen of the most structurally fatigued B-1s are being retired this year, which has actually permitted maintainers to concentrate resources on the remaining aircraft. Flight hours are up, and the B-1 has been a key component of the new Bomber Task Force missions.

But that doesn't mean a smaller bomber force is sustainable in the long run without reinvestment and modernization. Our national security requires that the B-21 Program move full-speed ahead. Fortunately, public reports indicate the B-21 Program is on-budget and on-time. "B-21 speeds to IOC," or initial operating capacity, reads a headline recently from June 3.

In an interview, the Air Force Global Strike Commander, Gen. Timothy Ray, detailed the agile and adaptive B-21 process. He noted that adding certain capabilities to the bombers could take one-tenth of the time it has for previous airframes.

The ability to incrementally add new capabilities and upgrades, instead of being forced to make wholesale block upgrades, should keep B-21 development moving quickly. And Congress—Congress can do its part by providing stable funding for the B-21.

Now, with the record of decision for Main Operating Base 1 signed, we also need to restart in earnest on the investments necessary to prepare Ellsworth for the B-21. We can now get to work building the high-end maintenance facilities for the B-21's stealth coating, training, and operations buildings for the new missions and a secure weapons facility for the nuclear mission.

Ellsworth has come a long way since it was placed on the chopping block 16 years ago.

I am grateful to the Air Force for this decision and the hard work by so many to get us here today. From BRAC to B-21, I am humbled to have been a small part of this effort, and I remain steadfast in my support for the mission and the men and women of the 28th Bomb Wing. I can't wait to get to work on this new chapter of Ellsworth's story.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

ECONOMY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning, the Labor Department announced that it had observed the largest uptick in prices since the depths of the great recession back in 2008, and core inflation has reached a nearly three-decade high.

The latest data reinforced what too many Americans have already been experiencing firsthand: The Biden administration's partisan spending bill has blunted our Nation's economic recovery with higher prices at the gas pump and the grocery store, a tougher time for small businesses trying to staff up, and unemployment policies that incentivize too many Americans to simply stay on the sidelines.

Republicans and outside economists warned that the worst of these conditions actually could have been avoided, but Democrats chose to go it alone. As recently as a few days ago, it appeared that President Biden was open to a new, more consultative approach to major legislation. He and the leading Republican on a committee of jurisdiction were engaged in what appeared to be good-faith, bipartisan negotiations on infrastructure spending, but then the President decided to walk away.

Now, at the White House's direction, Democrats in Congress are making preparations to muscle through a bloated spending bill on a unilateral, partisan basis, and it is becoming clear that the sort of united, bipartisan action Ranking Member CAPITO has made possible within the EPW Committee is getting harder and harder to replicate.

The bipartisanship that has defined infrastructure policy for years is becoming the exception to Democrats' new partisan rule. It might have something to do with the fact that our Democratic friends have taken to using "infrastructure" as a code for a growing wish list of unrelated liberal spending.

The Biden administration's first infrastructure plan made that much clear from its rollout back in March. Remember, this was a multitrillion-dollar bill that proposed to spend more on electric vehicles than on actual roads and bridges. It contained so many leftwing pet projects that the authors of the Green New Deal boasted about just how much of their manifesto's DNA had actually rubbed off.

Well, the administration's approach clearly influenced a number of Democrats right here in the Senate. Last month, on the same day that Chairman CARPER and Ranking Member CAPITO were guiding a surface transportation bill to a unanimous vote, the Finance Committee was busy marking up a partisan plan to pick winners and losers in the market for reliable domestic energy.

Just this week, we watched their go-it-alone approach replicated by Democrats over in the House. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee had a perfect opportunity to reach consensus on surface transportation. Our